

FORM B – BUILDING

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Assessor's Number USGS Quad Area(s) Form Number

8-160

ORLEANS

EAS.728

Town/City: Town of Eastham

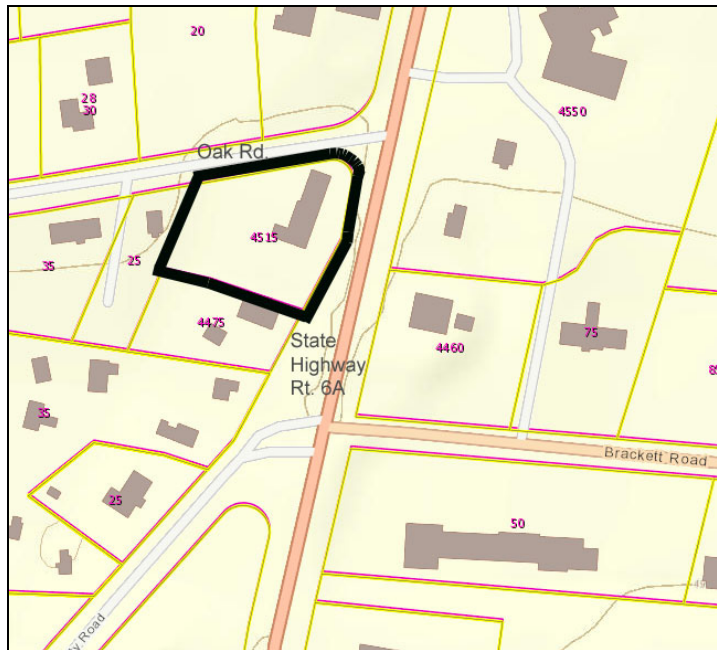
Place: (*neighborhood or village*): North Eastham

Photograph



View from southeast.

Locus Map (north at top)



Recorded by: Larson Fisher Associates, Inc. with Kathryn Grover

Organization: Eastham Historical Commission

Date: May 2013

Address: 4515 State Highway

Historic Name: Arthur Nickerson Gas Station

Uses: Present: automobile service station

Original: automobile service station

Date of Construction: 1939

Source: tax and assessors' records

Style/Form: Modern

Architect/Builder: unknown

Exterior Material:

Foundation: concrete block

Wall/Trim: metal clapboard & wood shingles/metal

Roof: asphalt

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures: none

Major Alterations (*with dates*): 3-bay concrete block extension to left/south (date unknown)

Condition: fair

Moved: no ☒ yes ☐ **Date:**

Acreage: 0.73 acre

Setting: The subject property is located on the west side of State Highway/Rt. 6 at the southwest corner of its intersection with Oak Road. A residential property with two dwellings adjoins the property on the south and single family residential uses lie farther to the south and west. Multiple commercial entities occupy the property to the east-northeast, including Town Plaza, a small office building and a retail fence outlet. To the south of that property is a Texaco gas station. Another service station and food mart is located across Oak Road to the north.

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

EASTHAM

4515 STATE HIGHWAY

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☐ Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:

The automobile service station on the subject property is a utilitarian one-story building without any obvious architectural style. The footprint is a rectangle with its long side roughly parallel to the State Highway roadway. The building has a flat roof and two gas pumps on an island between the building and road. (Earlier these indicated that it was a Citgo gas station, but this identification has been removed and the pumps may no longer be in service.) Initially it was about half its present size, of wood frame construction, having two vehicular bays and an office entrance flanked by two multi-paned windows to the left (south) of the vehicular bays. At some point a concrete block expansion to the south was constructed to add three vehicular bays. This section has a rear ell, also of concrete block. The front facade has been resided with a metal clapboard to unify these sections, but the original portion of the building is clad with wood shingles on the right (north) side and wood clapboard on the rear (west side). Three of the five overhead doors in these bays look to be original; the two at the far left are a little more recent. Three one-over-one wood double hung windows on the north side are intact. The door into the office, which is aluminum framed glass, is a replacement. A wall-mounted sign at the top and center of the front facade reads "Nickerson Service Center - 255-2844." Although inquiries were made in 1999 to add another service bay to the rear of the building, the consequent septic requirements apparently made this infeasible.¹ A building permit for a steel storage shed was issued on May 21, 2003, but that too was not erected on the site.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

The automobile service station at 4515 State Highway was built about 1939 by George A. and Nellie Sanders Nickerson for their son Arthur, whose occupation is listed in the 1940 census as proprietor and mechanic of a garage and service station. The building was constructed on land owned in 1924 by Caroline L. Brown Phillips (1855-1927), wife of farmer James Phillips (1849-1920), who were both Eastham natives. In March 1924 Phillips sold two adjoining parcels on the west side of State Highway and the south side of what is now Oak Road to Eastham builder and developer Clayton O. Horton, with the proviso that Horton must build and maintain "a good fence around the two parcels of land should be decide to keep poultry thereon said fence to be of such material as to keep all poultry from entering upon my other land."² Horton sold the two parcels three years later to Nellie Nickerson.³ Born in Boston in 1889, Nellie Sanders was the second wife of George Appleton Nickerson (1882-1953), son of fish dealer Samuel Nickerson and his wife Lucie Barnard. George Nickerson, a native of Wellfleet, married Wellfleet native Eva May Snow in 1904; after her death in 1909 he married Nellie Sanders. Their son Arthur Charles Nickerson was born in North Eastham in June 1915. George Nickerson's World War I draft registration card notes that he was then a fisherman and farmer. The family was living in a Boston lodging house in 1920, but by 1930 they had returned to North Eastham. The census that year listed George Nickerson as a farmer with \$5000 in real property.

Tax records for 1931 show Nellie Nickerson with a roadside stand worth \$400 and four house lots in "C O Horton plan," though the Barnstable County Registry of Deeds has no recorded plan attributed to Horton before 1948. Tax records for 1937 show her with the roadside stand, "outhouses" valued at only \$30, and 1.4 acres of land. By 1947 there was a house, a garage, and two gas tanks on the 1.4 acre lot. Nickerson is shown as owning lots 1-4 in block 34, which comprise the subject property and the four house lots in the unrecorded Horton plan cited in 1931 tax records.

The 1940 census documents George A. Nickerson as fifty-seven years old and working as a gang boss on a Barnstable County mosquito control project. His wife Nellie is shown as a general store proprietor, and son Arthur ran and worked as a mechanic in the garage and service station.

In 1951 Nellie Nickerson deeded the 4515 State Highway property to her son Arthur and his wife Marcia Cleaves Nickerson, whom he married in 1944.⁴ George Nickerson died in 1953 and Nellie died four years later. Arthur and Marcia Nickerson owned 4515 State Highway until 1998, when they deeded it to Scott W. Nickerson, probably their son, who was then living in Bermuda. He conveyed the property about a week later to ACN Realty Holdings (no doubt named for Arthur C. Nickerson), the current owner.⁵

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¹ Town of Eastham records, correspondence between East Cape Engineering, Inc. and the Department of Environmental Protection dated July 16, 1999; and follow-up correspondence.

² Caroline L. Phillips to Clayton O. Horton, 4 March 1924, Barnstable County Registry of Deeds (hereafter cited as BCD) 402:417.

³ Clayton O. Horton to Nellie Nickerson, 4 April 1927, BCD 443:260.

⁴ Nellie Nickerson to Arthur C. and Marcia C. Nickerson, North Eastham, 1 October 1951, BCD 794:83.

⁵ Arthur C. and Marcia C. Nickerson, Aspinet Road, to Scott W. Nickerson, Bermuda, 31 July 1998, BCD 11621:304; Scott W. Nickerson, Bermuda, to ACN Realty Holdings, North Eastham, 7 August 1998, BCD 11621:306.

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MAPS

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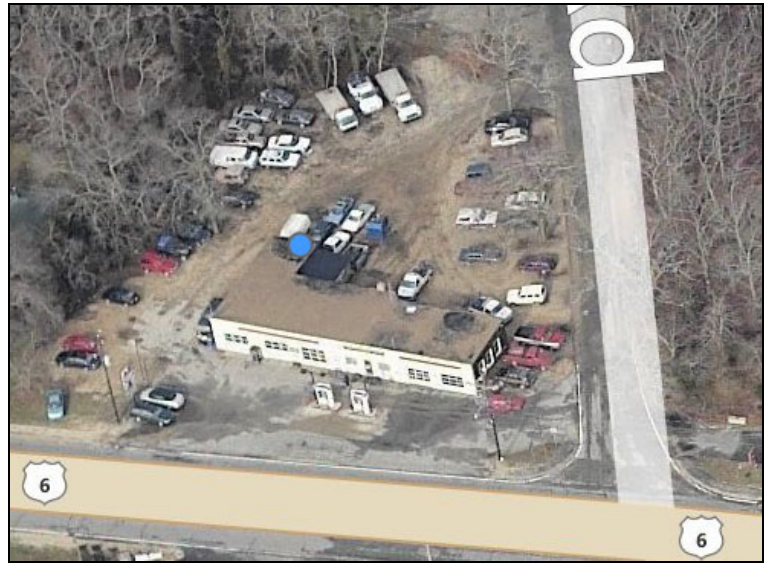
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PHOTOGRAPHS

(credit Larson Fisher Associates, 2012-2013 unless otherwise noted)



View from northeast.



Aerial view from east (photo courtesy of Bing Maps online).



View from north-northeast.



View from north-northwest